

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-13 are pending. Applicants respectfully submit that entry of the amendment to the specification by the Examiner is proper as the amendment embodies merely the correction of formal matters in the specification.

**PRIORITY**

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.78(a)(3) and 37 C.F.R. § 1.78(a)(6), applicants have respectfully petitioned for amendment of the specification of the above application to include the reference required by 35 U.S.C. 120 and 37 C.F.R. § 1.78(a)(2) for the benefit of a prior-filed copending international application designating the United States of America and the reference required by 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) and 37 C.F.R. § 1.55(a) to the prior provisional application.

The reference required by 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 C.F.R. § 1.78(a)(2) to the prior-filed application is:

This application is a continuation of International Application No. PCT/US01/49404, internationally filed December 21, 2001, which claims priority to the United States provisional application No. 60/258,270, filed December 27, 2000.

The reference required by 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) and 37 C.F.R. § 1.78(a)(5) to prior provisional application No. 60/258,270, filed December 27, 2000 is also presented in an Application Data Sheet in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.76(b)(6) attached as APPENDIX A to the PETITION UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.78(a)(3) and 37 C.F.R. § 1.78(a)(6).

CONCLUSION

Examination and allowance of Claims 1-13 is respectfully requested. If, however, any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is invited to telephone the Applicants' counsel at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



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